

## WHY EMPLOYEES QUIT



It has been said that employees don't leave an organisation they leave management, highlighting the fact that those in leadership are largely responsible for attrition rates. While there are external conditions that cause team members to move on that might include family and personal reasons, financial considerations, moving to another city etc. it is the internal organisational conditions that contribute most to higher rates of employees leaving.

All of us were created to progress, develop, to do something meaningful with our lives and most want to know that their contribution in the workplace is making a difference. When this is not occurring for the individual, a sense of unsettledness begins to surface. Left unaddressed they soon begin the process of looking at options – employment where they can make a meaningful contribution, where their work is valued.

I have spoken to countless employees across many organisations over the years and here are some common reasons for resignations.

### "I Don't Feel Valued"

Many that I have spoken to are not sure if they are doing a good job or that their work is valued. There is little if any praise for what the individual does. There is little or no recognition for extra effort. Management simply expect workers to get on with their job and shouldn't need to be thanked or recognised.

### "My Manager Is More Interested In Themselves"

Team members sense this a mile away. Where there is great self interest on the part of the manager as opposed to *other interest*, employees put up with existing in a interest free environment. While interest free is great if you are buying a piece of furniture, interest free in the workplace is not conducive to people buying in to the organisation. They request something of their manager, suggest ideas or provide exceptional work yet the manager feels threatened that someone 'below' them might actually be more capable than them.

### "I Can't Progress As I Would Like To"

Many employees want to progress in their skills and careers yet many organisations tend to slot people into positions, feeling satisfied that their org charts are complete yet failing to see that these charts should be moving documents as opposed to static. As I mentioned in the opening, all of us were born to grow and progress. To then get a job in a static environment where there is no stretch, no recognition and no advancement is debilitating for many people. Yes, there are those that like to show up, do their job and go home. The key for management is to identify those that want to progress and then work with them to make this possible.

### "My Manager Won't Address Key Issues"

How many times have I heard this? Many managers are excellent peace keepers, won't allow the boat to be rocked at any cost yet sometimes a boat needs to be sunk in order to build a greater one.

At one time I worked with a company where the business owner would not address the culture in the workshop, the main contributor to this being the foreman. The owner allowed the foreman to do whatever he pleased which included coming and going as he pleased, taking breaks for as long as he wanted and working as whatever pace he wanted. The foreman made the most of this situation and exemplified laziness. As he was responsible for the other tradesman and assistants, the team followed suit. As you can imagine productivity was very low.

A new tradesman joined the team, full of promise with a high work ethic. Within weeks he began acclimatising himself to the culture, becoming like the rest of them. Within a number of months he departed the company.

The issue here was the owner. He would not address the key issue - being the foreman. He chose to keep the peace rather than create conflict and he paid the price for it in terms of productivity, financially and the departure of a very able tradesman.

### Exemplary Managerial Traits

- Treats people as people not as workers. Communicate that they care for them personally not just their performance
- They will create if necessary, or wade into conflict head on
- Demonstrates openness to personal criticism seeking to identify how they can personally be more effective
- Will address employee concerns no matter how trivial they seem
- Communicates the vision of the organisation and how each team members work contributes to the broader perspective
- Ability to create a sense of team, bringing individual workers into a collective team environment
- Celebrates the wins
- Creates an enjoyable and fun culture to work in
- Addresses key performance issues directly and in private with employees. While many think this might create higher attrition of employees it actually communicates value to the individual assisting them to know how they are actually performing.
- Promotes their team above themselves
- Understands their people in terms of strengths, weaknesses, aspirations etc. and seeks to provide the best opportunities for them to flourish within the organisation

### ACTIONS

1. Identify those that want to progress and then design an individual development track for them
2. If you don't already, begin to praise people for their efforts and use the magical words 'Thank You'
3. Reward people for extra effort or great results. This can be in terms of a small gift, public praise at the next team meeting, a day off etc.
4. Conduct some self analysis. Are you fearful of others being seen as better than you? Do you consciously or sub consciously promote yourself and your work to the detriment of your team members?
5. In relation to the above point, how best can you promote others in your team?
6. Who can you immediately identify that could go onto a progression track to further promote their gifts, strengths and passion? Once identified, meet with them and discuss possibilities.
7. What areas have you been avoiding that you know need to be forthrightly addressed? Schedule a time in your diary to address these.

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